



HALEY BARBOUR
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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CONTACT: Dan Turner (601) 576-2009; dturner@governor.state.ms.us
Laura Hipp (601) 576-2020; lhipp@governor.state.ms.us

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**LARGEST STATE AGENCIES BACK
GOVERNOR'S CALL FOR FLEXIBILITY**

Jackson, Mississippi – Directors of the largest agencies in state government, have asked the Legislature for lump sum budget authority and the flexibility to better manage personnel needs in order to limit potential job cuts by removing the bureaucratic constraints of the State Personnel Board.

In a letter to Lt. Gov. Phil Bryant and House Speaker Billy McCoy, agency leaders say lifting restrictions imposed by state service statutes would allow them to more effectively achieve the savings necessary as the state faces substantial budget shortfalls this year and in Fiscal Year 2011. Agency directors joining in the request include the Departments of Mental Health, xxx, xxx, and cxxx.

“Achieving the necessary savings to balance the FY 2010 budget will not be an easy task for any state agency, but it can be done effectively and in a manner that minimizes personnel cuts as much as possible,” the letter says. “Toward this end, it is imperative that state agency directors be given the proper management tools that allow us that flexibility. Failure to grant this flexibility will necessarily result in larger personnel cuts.”

Governor Haley Barbour's Executive Budget Recommendation, delivered to the Legislature in November 2009, called for the action. Removing Personnel Board restrictions are the only way to balance staffing and service demands with the reality of falling tax revenues, the letter states. Granting agency directors lump sum budget authority will allow them to move appropriations from one spending category to another as needed, reducing the need for layoffs.

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